

Using the Unit Organizer

Planning is essential to effective teaching. No one method is better than another when it comes to planning; however, "... master teachers use planning to help them select the content and methods that will most help their students achieve predefined learning goals. Without effective planning, students are less likely to achieve these goals" (Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisian, and Brown, 2004).

Begin planning by carefully considering the following needs:

- content and standards to be mastered
- students' abilities, learning styles, and prior knowledge
- cultural, ethnic, and economic diversity of the class

Research the resources and materials that are the most productive match to these needs. Finally, plan the most appropriate uses for the amount of time available.

Once these issues are settled, select the learning activities and teaching techniques that will ensure a successful learning experience for every student. Decide on an effective way to ensure some flexible group time to allow reteaching. Lastly, select various ways to check for understanding throughout the unit. Most importantly, decide how to provide feedback that most effectively promotes student growth and reflection. A rubric accomplishes this very well.

To culminate the unit, determine the final evaluation process. Select methods that will accurately indicate each student's understanding of the standard.

With planning, teachers are equipped to teach their students, monitor and adjust as needed, and present each individual with opportunities to become a confident, productive learner.